

Simplified key to coral genera in wildlife trade (continued)

44. Colonies with branches ranging from slender, pencil-like stems to thick columns. Branches may be profusely divided or have few or no secondary branches:	Go To:
a. flush, pore-like corallites; branch with prominent wart-like verrucae	<i>Pocillopora</i>
b. thick, rounded or compressed stems with blunt, rounded tips; corallites have small spines or are hooded	<i>Stylophora</i>
c. finely-branched (< 1 cm diameter) colonies that taper to blunt conical points . . .	<i>Seriatopora</i>
d. corallites are round and raised; protruding above the coenosteum 1-3 mm; colonies may have an enlarged central (axial) corallite at the branch tip	<i>Acropora</i>
e. corallites are separated from each other by a coenosteum with small pillars, cones or mounds (papillae); corallites are pore-like	<i>Montipora</i>
f. corallites flush or depressed, polygonal, with 12 septa; branch surface smooth See page 48-49 <i>Porites</i>	37
g. branches are slender or thick, septa are prominent and raised above branch surface	45
h. branches with large, rounded corallites raised a few millimeters above the surface, branches smooth	46

Pocillopora (1999: over 288,000 pieces in trade, approximately 5% live; also 45,000 kg)

- colonies compact, bushy, meandering flabellate plates, profusely branched with secondary divisions, or branched with no secondary divisions
- “Alabaster Coral” colonies often have a translucent skeleton and yellow-brown tissue may appear transparent
- corallites are depressed, tiny and jagged polygons that have rudimentary septa
- distinguished from other branching corals by a rough surface consisting of raised growths between corallites, and poorly developed septa
- some species have a distinctive pink coloration
- polyps may be open in day, giving the coral a fuzzy appearance
- captive-bred specimens survive in aquaria better than wild specimens

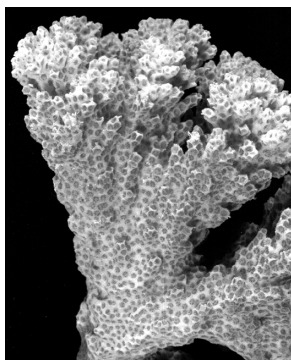
Stylophora (1999: over 15,900 pieces in trade, approximately 25% live; also 204 kg)

- “False Finger Coral” colonies have finger-thick branches covered with small pore-like calices
- corallites may be hooded or have small spines
- *Stylophora* is distinguished from branching *Porites* colonies by yellowish-tan (or pink) branch tips and hooded corallites which give the colony a rough appearance

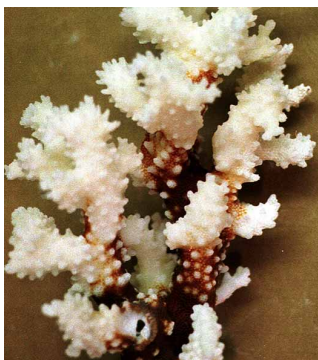
Seriatopora (1999: 6,380 pieces in trade, approximately 75% live; also 236 kg)

- “Birds Nest Corals” form thin, delicate branches < 0.5 cm across which end in fine, spiky to conical points
- corallites arranged in longitudinal rows

Pocillopora



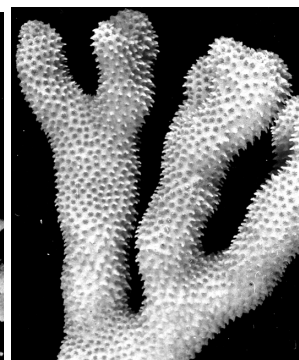
Pocillopora



Seriatopora



Stylophora

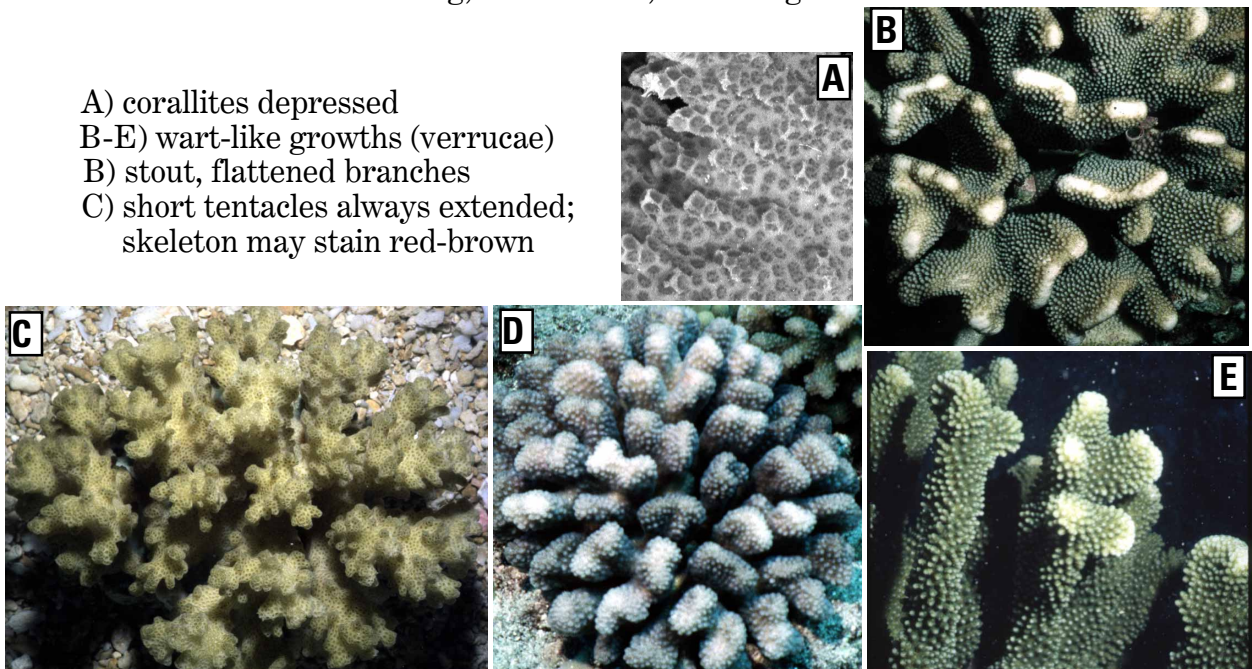


Branching and Columnar Corals

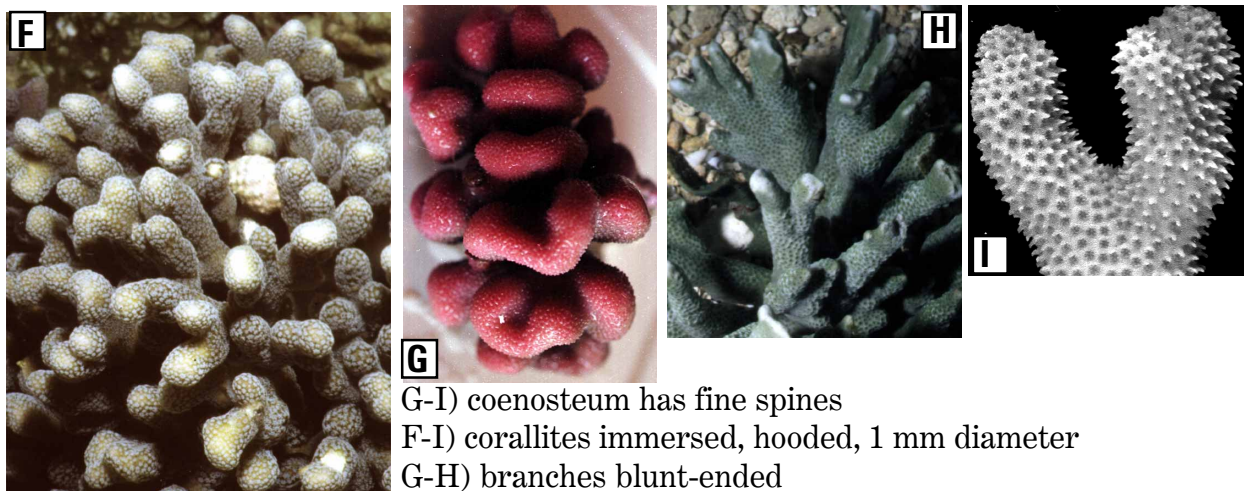
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- Pocillopora* ■ common name: Cauliflower Coral, Alabaster Coral (7 species)
 ■ colonies branching, arborescent; variable growth forms

- A) corallites depressed
 B-E) wart-like growths (verrucae)
 B) stout, flattened branches
 C) short tentacles always extended;
 skeleton may stain red-brown

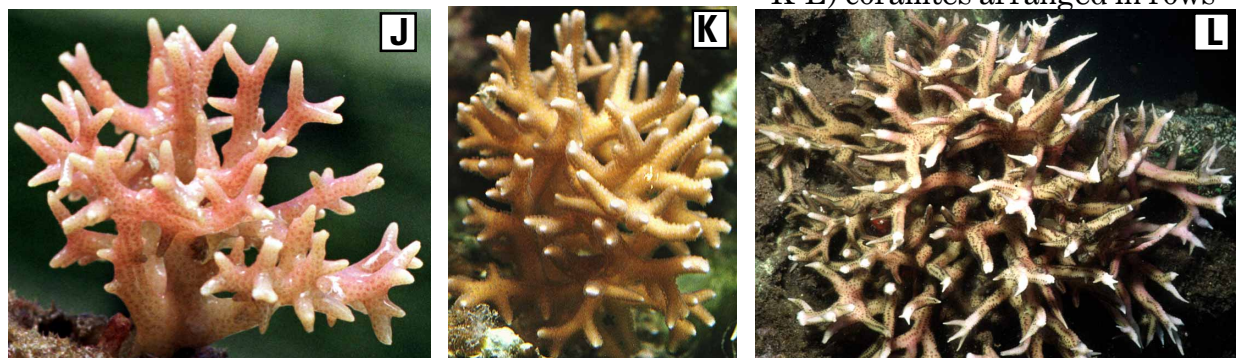


- Stylophora* ■ common name: Bush, Finger, Brush, Cauliflower Coral (5 species)
 ■ colonies form branches that are red, yellow, tan, and occasionally green
 ■ *Stylophora* is similar to *Paulastrea*, however corallites differ in structure



- Seriatopora*
 ■ common name: Bird's Nest Coral (2 species)
 ■ colonies arborescent, compact with fine branches

- J) colony forms compact "bushes"
 J-L) thin tapering branches with pointed or rounded tips
 K-L) corallites arranged in rows



Simplified key to coral genera in the wildlife trade (continued)

45. Colonies with branches ranging from slender, pencil-like stems to thick columns. Branches may be profusely divided or have few or no secondary branches:
- d. corallites are round and raised; protruding above the coenosteum 1-3 mm; colonies may have an enlarged central (axial) corallite at the branch tip
 - e. colonies have thin tapered branches, widely spaced protruding radial corallites, but lack axial corallites
 - f. corallites are separated from each other by a coenosteum with small pillars, cones or mounds (papillae); corallites are pore-like

Go To:

Acropora

Anacropora

Montipora

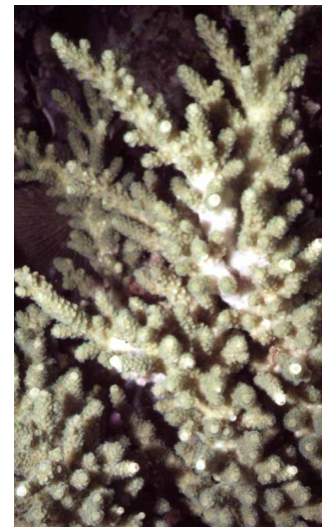
Acropora is distinguished from all other branching corals by the presence of prominent raised corallites that give individual branches a bumpy appearance. Upon close inspection these can be differentiated from the wart-like growths of *Pocillopora*, raised structures on *Montipora*, and hooded structures of *Stylophora*. *Anacropora* produces tapered branches that may resemble *Acropora*, but colonies lack axial corallites and corallites are much smaller and widely spaced. Corallites may have a conical spine.

Acropora (1999: approx. 159,000 pieces in trade, 93,000 dead and 65,000 live; also 9273 kg)

- “Staghorn corals” are the most abundant and diverse genus of coral in the Indo-Pacific. There are 13-15 growth forms, with variations in size and shape of branches, number and position of secondary branches, size and shape of axial and radial corallites, number of septa, and structure of coenosteum.
- colonies form branching, columnar, and table-like growth forms
- branching forms are divided into: arborescent (tree-like with few secondary branches), bottlebrush (principle stem with numerous short branchlets), cespitose (compact bushy colonies), and cormybose (small branches arise from a basal pedestal)
- corallite are tubular, 1-2 mm diameter, and are generally elevated from the coenosteum
- branches often have a terminal corallite that is larger than the other corallites

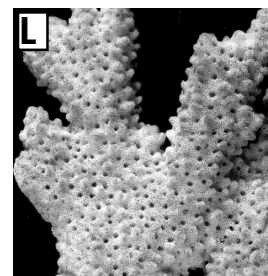


Additional examples of *Acropora*



Montipora (1999: over 23,000 pieces in trade, approximately 30% live; 2650 kg)

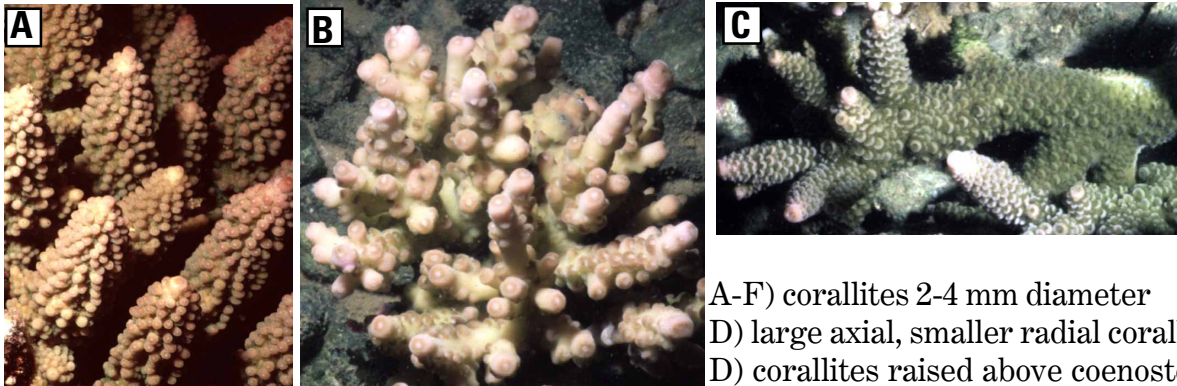
- “Velvet Corals” are an abundant and diverse genus with branching, crustose, plating or massive growth forms; colors vary from green, purple, brown, and red
- colonies have small (< 2 mm), pore-like calices similar to *Porites*, however the surface of *Montipora* colonies are rough and covered with nodules, wart-like formations, branched spines or other characteristic swellings (papillae) and corallites are often immersed within the textured corallum
- septa project inwards, but are microscopic; live colonies often have a fuzzy appearance due to small expanded polyps



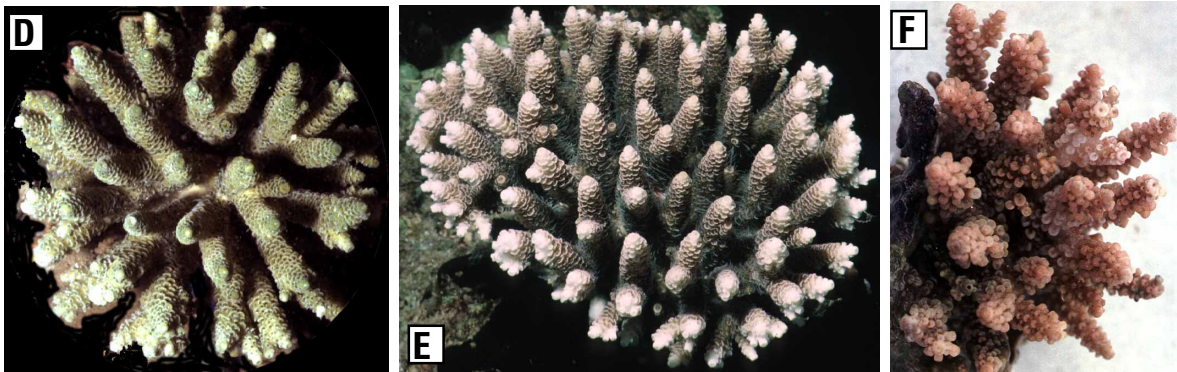
Branching Corals Family Acroporidae

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Acropora ■ common name: Staghorn, Cluster, Bluetip, Bush, Cat's Paw, Bottlebrush
110 species ■ colonies robust or delicately branched, submassive, tabular

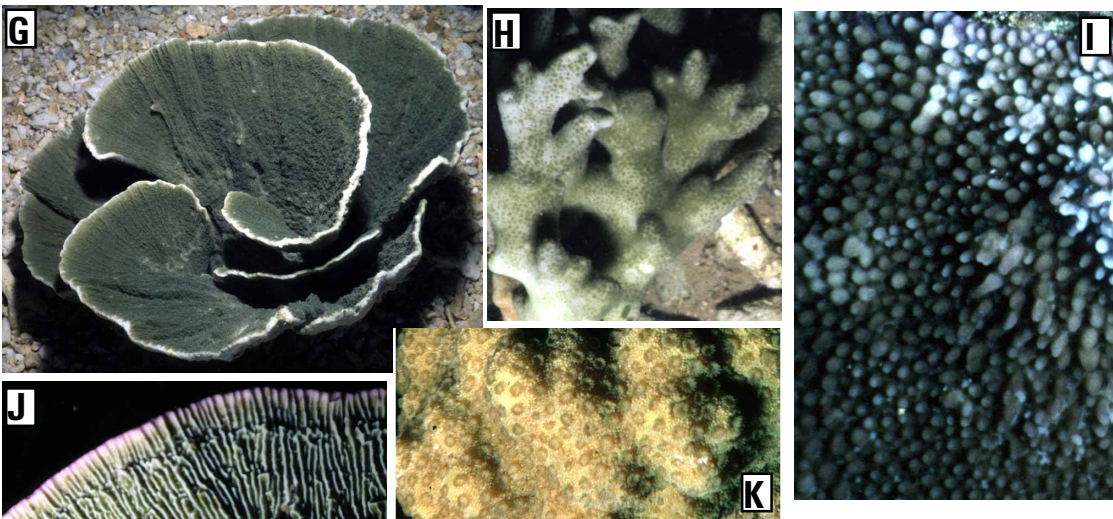


A-F) corallites 2-4 mm diameter
D) large axial, smaller radial corallites
D) corallites raised above coenosteum



corymbose colony

■ common name: Velvet Coral, Velvet Finger Coral (56 species)
Montipora ■ colonies form branches, plates, crusts or columns
■ *Montipora* is most similar to *Porites*, however *Montipora* lack radial septa



G-J) colonies have wide variation in appearance; one species may have multiple growth forms

K) corallites small, <2 mm diameter; immersed; polyps very small; tentacles short, may extend during day

J) coenosteum porous, may have papillae or tuberculae (I)

L) septa generally not visible; septa consist of rows of spines that project inward